Application No.: 09/839,664
Response to OA of 04/05/06



**Amendments to the Claims**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of the claims:**

1. (currently amended) A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:

a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server $S_i$ to a plurality of servers including $S_i$, wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;

b) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set;

c) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers, if at least one server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket; and

d) collecting the identity of any server $S_k$ broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set[[,]] upon receipt of the broadcast, wherein steps a), b), c), and d) are performed to validate the e-ticket and wherein step d) is repeated as long as $S_i$ has not received its own broadcast and there is no server $S_k$ in the second answer set such that the associated answer set is a subset of the second answer set.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein step b) is performed until a majority of servers has answered.

3. (canceled)

4. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

e) accepting the e-ticket if $S_i$ receives its own broadcast and the answer set is a subset of the second answer set.

5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of:

d) rejecting the e-ticket if $S_i$ has received its own broadcast and the answer set is not a subset of the second answer set.

6. (previously presented) A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:

a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server $S_i$ to a plurality of servers including $S_i$, wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;

b) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set;

c) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers, if at least one server previously answered an inquiry for the e-ticket;

d) collecting the identity of any server $S_k$ broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set, upon receipt of the broadcast; and

e) rejecting the e-ticket if the answer set is a subset of the second answer set and $S_i$ has not received its own broadcast.

7. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the e-ticket represents a prior reservation of goods or services.

8. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the e-ticket contains no information specifically identifying the owner.

9. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein broadcasts are performed in accordance with a selected one of a pure atomic broadcast, a general broadcast, a CT-broadcast, and an OPT-broadcast protocol.

10. (currently amended) A method of validating an e-ticket, comprising the steps of:

a) sending the e-ticket from an initial receiving server $S_i$ to a plurality of servers including $S_i$, wherein each server returns an answer indicative of whether that server previously answered any inquiry for the e-ticket;

b) selecting a conflict mode if at least one selected server of a majority of servers answered a previous inquiry for the e-ticket; and

c) selecting a conflict-free mode if none of the majority of servers has answered any previous inquiry for the e-ticket, wherein steps a), b), and c) are performed to validate the e-ticket and wherein step b) further comprises the steps of:

i) broadcasting the e-ticket and the answer set to the plurality of servers; and

ii) collecting the identity of any server $S_k$ broadcasting the e-ticket and an associated answer set in a second answer set, upon receipt of the broadcast; and wherein step b) (ii) is repeated as long as $S_i$ has not received its own broadcast and there is no server $S_k$ in the second answer set such that the associated answer set $\subseteq$ the second answer set in order to validate the e-ticket.

11. (original) The method of claim 10 wherein step c) further comprises the step of:

i) accepting the e-ticket.

12. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of:

d) collecting the identities of the answering servers in an answer set.

13. (canceled)

14. (canceled)

15. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of accepting the e-ticket if $S_i$ receives its own broadcast and the answer set $\subseteq$ the second answer set.

16. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of rejecting the e-ticket if $S_i$ has received its own broadcast and the answer set is not a subset of the second answer set.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 further comprising the step of:

d) rejecting the e-ticket if the answer set $\subseteq$ the second answer set and $S_i$ has not received its own broadcast.

18. (original) The method of claim 10 wherein the e-ticket represents a prior reservation of goods or services.

19. (original) The method of claim 13 wherein broadcasts are performed in accordance with a selected one of a pure atomic broadcast, a general broadcast, a CT-broadcast, and an OPT-broadcast protocol.